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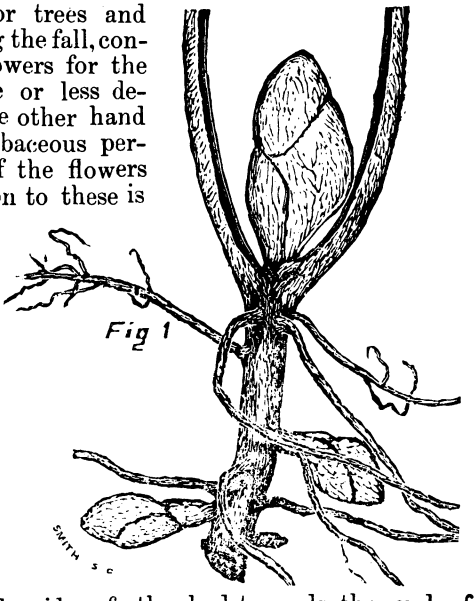
pretensions to such knowledge or ability as he possessed and the land was his "to enter in and possess." When he returned in 1815 the land was already partly possessed for Pursh, Nuttall, Elliott, Bigelow, etc., were at work. When we come to analyze the character of this eccentric man it seems as though the secret of all his eccentricity and cause of his failure to reach the rank for which nature had fitted him, was an unbounded egotism. Then, as now, there occasionally appeared one who preferred self to truth, even in communion with nature, who is the very embodiment of truth and is supposed to cultivate a love for it in her votaries. But the fact is scientific men are dreadful egotists and their own opinion is often worth a good deal more to them than the truth, and our estimate of Rafinesque is that he was simply an extreme and outspoken representative of a large class of scientific men to-day. And so he was ever working, but rarely accomplishing anything; always eager to publish, but his writings the rarest of all; anxious for his name to be remembered, but so using his talents as almost to bury himself and his works in a too harsh condemnation.

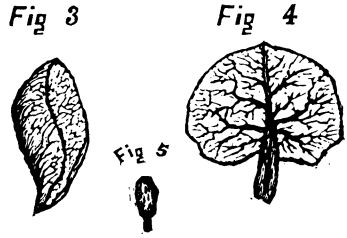
"Effort for self ends aimlessly;
Effort for truth grows endlessly."

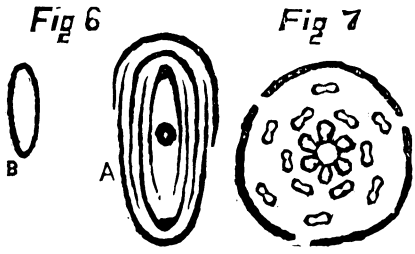
The Hibernaculum of Asarum Canadense, L.

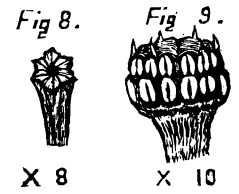
It is quite common for trees and shrubs to form buds during the fall, containing the leaves and flowers for the following year in a more or less developed condition. On the other hand it is very rare among herbaceous perennials to find any trace of the flowers until spring. An exception to these is our common Wild Ginger. On the 25th of November, I noticed in the garden of Mr. W. Werthner, that the creeping rootstocks had formed very flat buds which laid horizontally on the ground or were slightly covered by soil (Fig 1 and 6 B). He kindly permitted me to take the specimens. On the side of the bud towards the end of the shoot will be found a small ovate-oblong scale (Fig. 2). Follow-



ing this scale in alternating order will be found two more of the shape indicated in Fig. 3. All three scales are visible on any bud without dissection (Fig. 1). Within these are two leaves (Fig. 4) and in the center the flower bud (Fig. 5). The general arrangement of the parts can be seen in Fig. 6 A. The style (Fig. 8) is already quite well developed, the lobes and furrows being distinctly shown and the stamens (Fig. 9) contain the rudimentary pollen of the next year. The arrangement of the parts of the flower may be seen in Fig. 7. The buds are easily attainable in spring and it seems to me could be profitably used in the class room in comparison with the hibernacula of ligneous plants.—AUG. F. FOERSTE, *Dayton, Ohio.*







The Lignified Snake from Brazil.

It will be remembered that in the December GAZETTE a brief notice was given of what was described as being a lignified reptile. A tolerably full account of this phenomenon was given in the *Popular Science Monthly* and *Torrey Bulletin* for November, the account being the reproduction of one published in the French *La Nature* of last April. This account comes with all the authority of M. Olivier and the Botanical Society of France. It seems that the piece of wood containing the specimen is the property of Senor Lopez Netto, Brazilian Minister to the United States, who first took it to France but has it now in this country. After running the gauntlet of the scientists of Rio de Janeiro and the Botanical Society of France it has remained for our keen-sighted and quick-witted veteran botanist, Dr. Gray, to call in question its genuineness. Alas for the phenonenon that is not sure of its foundations when Dr. Gray lays his heavy hand upon it! Hear what he has to say about this latest "snake story":

"Through the kindness of the Brazilian Minister, we have seen

[1] Am. Jour. Sci. Jan. 1883, p. 81.